

Congressman Mark DeSaulnier

DEFENSE & VETERANS

THINGS TO KNOW:

- *Has regularly opposed the Defense authorization bill (NDAA) since coming to Congress due to lack of accountability and oversight*
- *Successfully included an amendment in the NDAA to provide financial transparency for servicemembers separating from the Armed Services*
- *Successfully included an amendment in the NDAA recognizing the bias experienced by the Port Chicago 50 during World War II*

SUMMARY OF POSITION

Our national security is among Congressman DeSaulnier's top priorities and he believes that the men and women who bravely and selflessly sign up to keep our country safe deserve our utmost respect and gratitude, which should include quality health care and a VA that works for them, education and job training, transition programs, and mental health services.

BY THE NUMBERS

- At least **\$125 billion in wasteful spending** buried by senior Department of Defense officials.
- The defense budget increased in 2020 by another \$30 billion, bringing total defense spending to a whopping \$738 billion.
- Veterans are 1.5 times more likely to die by suicide and 50% more likely to become homeless compared to the general population, while 1/10 veterans lack health insurance.
- Cyber attacks, an increasing trend our defense systems must protect against, is estimated to **amass \$6 trillion in damages annually by 2021**.

WORKING FOR YOU

Demanding Department of Defense Accountability:

The Department of Defense is the only federal agency to never undergo a full audit despite evidence of billions of dollars in waste every year. Until an audit is completed, we cannot accurately identify which programs need funding and what spending is appropriate. To encourage an expedited overview, Congressman DeSaulnier supports the Audit the Pentagon Act (H.R. 3079), which would decree 0.5% from the Defense budget each year an audit is not completed.

Protecting Veterans' Benefits:

For years the VA has been withholding disability payments from veterans who received separation pay when leaving the military. To stop this injustice, Congressman DeSaulnier joined Rep. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ) in authoring the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act (H.R. 4016), which would prevent the VA from withholding disability pay in order to recoup separation payments made to veterans.

Keeping the Administration Accountable:

In an ever-changing security landscape, it is imperative that we follow the checks and balances laid out in the Constitution for our nation's leaders. To have faith in that system, Congressman DeSaulnier supports the Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act (H.R. 669) and the No Unconstitutional Strike against North Korea Act (H.R. 4140).